



Legal protection has been given the wolf throughout most of its historical range, but in most cases it came too late and man seldom hears nature's grand opera, the wolfpack chorus.

This spine-tingling chorus is responsible for much wolf legendry, and little imagination is needed to invent frightening stories about it. Howling is a social event for wolves--like a community sing. Besides howling for fun, they make a wide variety of other vocal sounds for communication. According to the Inland Eskimos of Canada, wolves even howl in relay across miles of tundra to announce the movements of caribou herds.

A glaring modern misnomer is the term "wolf" when applied to humans. Instead of a carefree Don Juan, the real male wolf is a faithful, devoted mate. He not only provides food for his family, but also takes equal responsibility with his mate in the training and protection of the pups. Wolves mate for life, forming a closely knit family group. The females are exemplary as wives and mothers. And biologists believe the wolf's mysterious system of birth control allows it to bear only as many young as the environment can support.

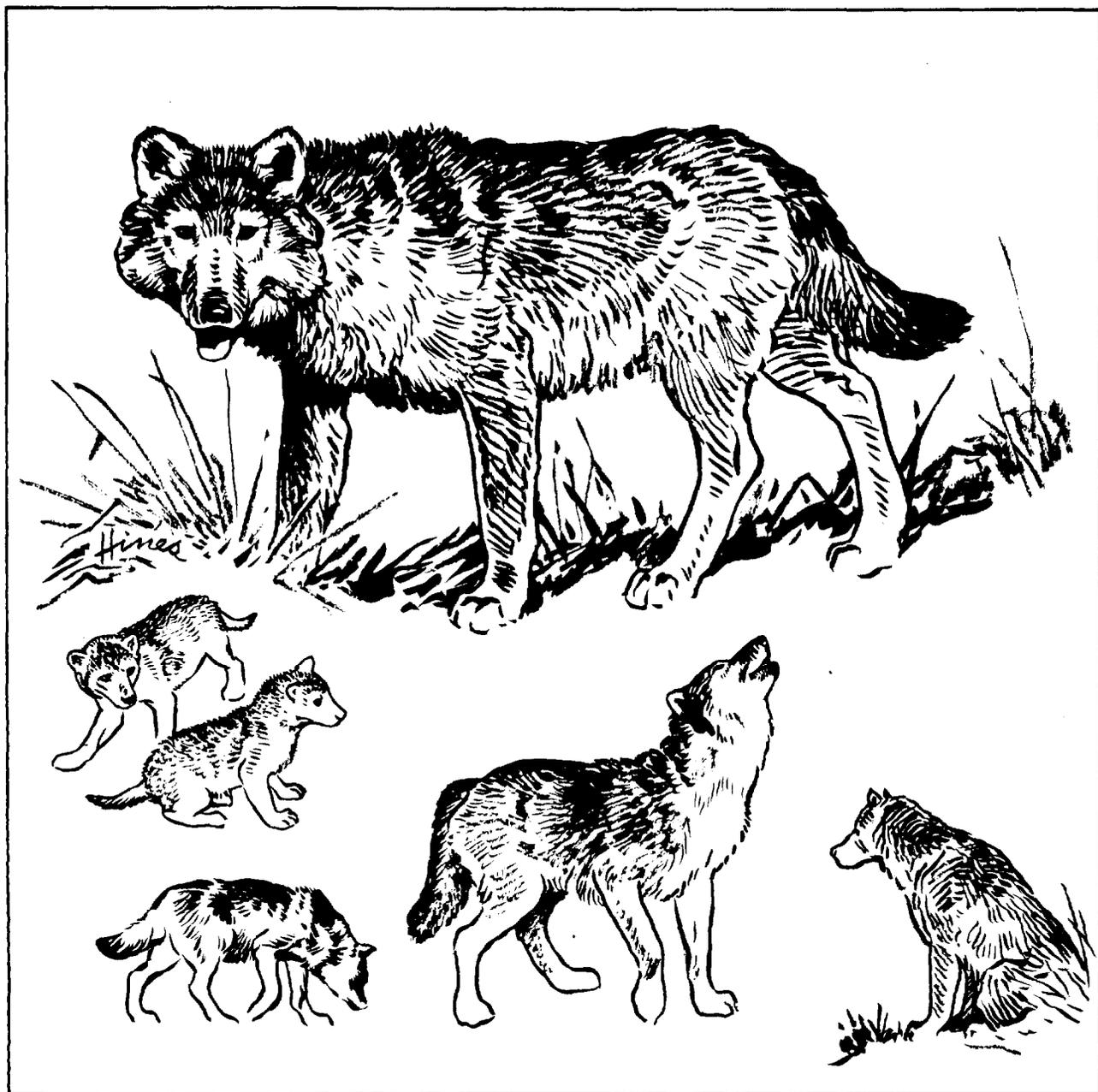
The timber wolf is a large, broad-headed, wild canine (Canis lupus) related to domestic dogs. Although very few wolves ever reach such heroic proportions, specimens of the larger subspecies have weighed as much as 175 pounds, measured 69 inches from tip of nose to tip of tail and 38 inches at the shoulder. Females are smaller--usually about two-thirds the size of males. A thick, rich fur, usually of grizzled gray, covers both the male and the female.

Although maligned as a stock killer, the wolf's principal food in its natural habitat is wild animals. Deer, caribou, moose, rabbits, and small rodents are favorite menu items. They prey mainly on the old, weak, or

diseased animals and thus contribute to the health of game populations. By aiding in the reduction of wildlife to the carrying capacity of its food supply, they also help keep game ranges in good condition.

Conservationists suggest several ways to save the remaining wolf population: remove the archaic and discredited bounty system; restock wilderness areas where there is no conflict with livestock interests; and locate remnant populations and preserve their environment.

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TIMBER WOLF